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Date: May 11, 2019
Cc: "Maya Moskowitz" <moskowitz@senatorbiaggi.com<mailto:moskowitz@senatorbiaggi.com>>
Subject: Invitation to sign an open letter about Rev. Diaz Sr.

On behalf of Senator Alessandra Biaggi, I'm sending the below open letter regarding statements by New York City Council member Rev. Reuben Diaz Sr. about reporting on sexual harassment in the workplace. We would like to issue this letter Monday. If possible, please respond by Sunday night.

Thank you.

David Neustadt Communications Director
NYS Senator Alessandra Biaggi

OPEN LETTER REGARDING RUBEN DIAZ SR.'S REFUSAL TO REPORT SEXUAL HARASSMENT

At sensitivity training for New York City Council members, councilmember Rev. Ruben Diaz Sr. stated that he would not "rat" if he saw sexual harassment in the Council's offices. Rev. Diaz demonstrated total and complete disregard for the safety of people in the workplace.

Since it is the obligation of City Council members and other managers to report sexual harassment, the Council must make it clear that Rev. Diaz or anyone else who refuses to perform this important duty will face substantial discipline.

It would be hypocritical for government to enforce standards in the private sector if we cannot uphold these standards ourselves. Allowing Rev. Diaz to refuse to report workplace harassment undermines the integrity of the Council, threatens the people who work there, and sets a terrible precedent that reporting is somehow elective rather than a responsibility.

Rev. Diaz has attempted to downgrade sexual harassment by describing it as a "compliment." This is not the first time he's tried to spin his willful disregard for the human rights of others, whether it's LGBTQ+ New Yorkers or women. But let's be clear: the context of his comments was not about whether it's okay to compliment someone. It was in response to a training scenario that described a comment regarding someone's appearance and body which then made the target of those comments visibly uncomfortable. This is not complicated and it's definitely not a compliment. The Reverend is again feigning ignorance and misconstruing the facts.

For these reasons, we are calling for Rev. Diaz to resign.

Reverend Diaz's behavior is unacceptable and it must be addressed by the Council and others. As a City, we must continue to be clear that there is no room for willful neglect of a City official's responsibility to maintain the safety of New Yorkers.

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